

Public Works Committee
Minutes for May 6, 2008

Present: Rob Crowner, Chair; Steve Braun, Don George, Charlie Moran, Guilford Mooring, Vince O'Connor

Administrative Matters

Minutes: Minutes of the April 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously with minor edits suggested by Mr. Braun.

Minutes of the February, 2008 meeting have still not been prepared for committee review. Mr. O'Connor acknowledges the tardiness.

Next meeting: After discussion the date for the next committee meeting was set for June 3rd at 7 p.m., location to be determined.

Changes to Annual Committee Report

Mr. O'Connor, citing the deteriorated condition of Pelham Road east of Poets Corner, moved that the wording of the PWC annual report be changed to recommend extending the planned repair work this summer as far as possible, perhaps to Bayberry Rd. He further suggested that the work be paid for by "borrowing" money from next year's expected Chapter 90 revenue from the state.

Mr. Crowner asked Mr. Mooring if we can, in fact, take money from next year, as Vince requests. Mr. Mooring says no—we cannot borrow from the future in this manner. He suggested that since there is no extra money in this year's appropriation, the only way to extend the repair work beyond the currently-agreed-upon Poets Corner is to drop something else from this year's budget. He also said that one way to save money would be to *not* widen Pelham Rd. as planned or repair the sidewalks.

Mr. O'Connor said such a reduction in scope is not acceptable to him. He asked Mr. Mooring what else was being paid for with this year's Chapter 90 money. Mr. Mooring said that a new backhoe (for roughly \$110,000) and approximately \$80,000 for design work on the Big Y intersection work on University Dr. and the re-design work for the University Avenue/Amity St. intersection were being paid for with Chapter 90 money.

After discussion, no one on the committee advocated delaying or eliminating these items in order to pay for an extension of the Pelham Road work.

Mr. O'Connor added that he would like to see the design work for future repairs to Sand Hill Rd. be included in next year's work, as well as the committee's annual report to Town Meeting.

The committee agreed (without a motion) to make the following changes to the annual report:

1. Omit bullet item #2 about Gaylord Street since there will not be sufficient funds to complete this section.
2. Change bullet item #3 on page 1 as follows (addition in bold): Resurface Pelham Road from the bridge to Poet's Corner **and, if funds allow, as far beyond that point eastward as possible.**
3. Change the final bullet item on page 1 as follows (addition in bold): **Complete all construction design work for repairs to Sand Hill Road and,** if funds allow, repair the drainage system on Sand Hill Road in anticipation of repaving in FY09.

Mr. O'Connor noted that although the committee's annual report recommends lists of sidewalks to be built or repaired, that no money was included in the present capital plan for this work. He suggested that Mr. Crouner make some kind of note to this effect in the annual report. "Otherwise people will think this work will be done, and they won't cross reference and see that there was no money allocated in the capital budget," Mr. O'Connor said.

East Leverett Road Bridge

Mr. George relayed his efforts to review the plans for the replacement of the bridge on Leverett bridge. He was rebuffed in his efforts because the supervisor in charge said he could not share the plans with Mr. George because "he wasn't a town employee" and a post-9/11 regulation prohibits ordinary citizens from seeing bridge plans. When Mr. George followed up with a call to the Northampton office of the state highway agency he was shunted to another state office. He says he will keep trying to see the plans. He noted that the bridge needs foundations on rock, which may be a difficult construction job because the rock will be below the water table and the work must be done alongside a running stream. He said that he will refrain from judgment about whether or not the seemingly protracted construction schedule for the bridge work is actually justified until he has carefully studied the plans.

Mr. Mooring said he will attempt to get a copy of the plans for Mr. George to review.

Procedural Matters

Mr. O'Connor moved that the chair be authorized to speak on behalf of the committee to Town Meeting regarding the proposed street acceptances recommended by the Select Board. This authorization is required by town rules. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. O'Connor also moved that the chair be authorized to speak on behalf of the committee to Town Meeting in favor of the relamping efforts included in the capital plan. The motion was approved unanimously.

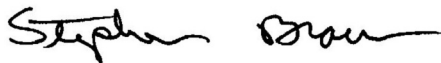
Mr. Moran moved that the committee ask the Select Board to grant all committee members "special municipal employee status." Such status is required because state law prevents town employees from holding more than one position, yet some committee members do occasional work for the town. By granting "special municipal employee status" to committee members, the Select Board essentially excuses committee members from the application of that state law. The motion was approved unanimously. The chair of the committee will submit the necessary paperwork to the Select Board for renewal of SME status.

Note on Atkins Farm/Rt. 116 Improvements

There will be a meeting to review and discuss the official "25% design completion" milestone for the road re-design work in the vicinity of Atkins Farm, to be held on June 16th at the Red Barn building of Hampshire College. The public is welcome to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Braun". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Braun" clearly distinguishable.

Stephen Braun
Secretary *pro tem*